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Mr. *Richard Mayo's*
Farewell-Sermon,

Preach'd *August 17, 1707.*





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A FAREWELL SERMON

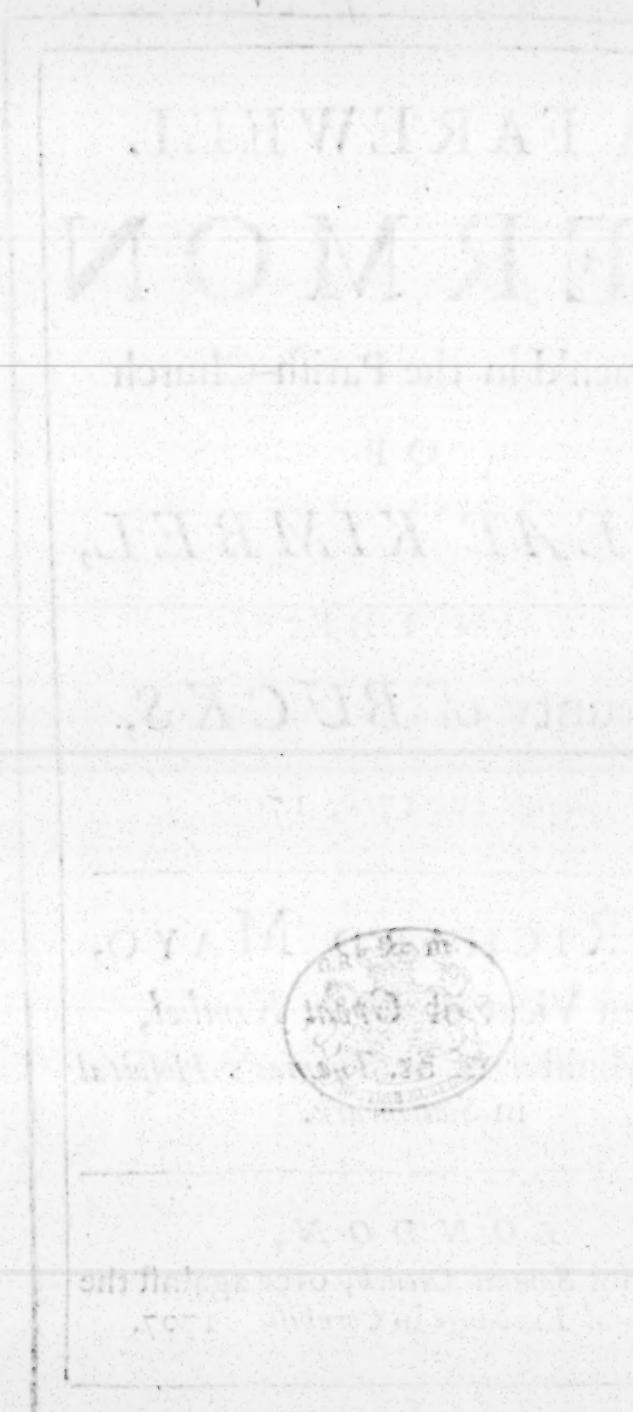
Preach'd in the Parish-Church
OF
GREATH KIMBEL,
IN THE
County of *BUCKS*,

August the 17th, 1707.

By RICHARD MAYO,
Then Vicar of *Great Kimbel*,
Now Minister of St. Thomas's Hospital
in Southwark.

L O N D O N ,

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To the Inhabitants of the
Parish of Great Kimbel in
Bucks.

Dearly Beloved ;

THE last Words of departing Friends have been thought worthy of Remembrance ; when many others, as useful, that were spoken before, have slipt the Memory. I send you therefore these my last Words, which contain, for the main, the things I would have spoken to you, if upon my Departure from you, I had been immediately to appear before the Judge of Heaven and Earth. It cannot be long before you and I meet at the great Tribunal, or Judgment-Seat of Christ ; the Lord grant, that we may not rise up as Witnesses one against another, at that day ; but that we may meet with Joy at our Lord's right Hand, and be found of Him in Peace. Tho'

Dedication.

I am at this Distance from you, I shall be enquiring of you, whether the Careless amongst you be under any Convictions; whether the more Serious do increase in Zeal for Religion and the Power of Godliness; whether young ones are inquisitive after Knowledge, and who of you are seeking the way to Zion with their Faces thitherward. I have spoken so fully and freely to you in this Sermon, that I shall add no more, but the Blessing or Prayer that I concluded with; The God of Peace that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight.----So prays

Your late Minister, and

Still your Servant for Jesus sake,

Octob. 3. 1707.

Richard Mayo.

A

Farewell-Sermon,

Preach'd

In the Parish-Church of
Great Kimbel, &c.

Acts 20. 32.

And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

THE word [Now] in the beginning of the Text, being a Note of Time, leads us to the Consideration of the Season when these Words were

were spoken ; which was upon the Apostle's taking his last *Farewell* of the Church of *Ephesus*, ver. 25. He saith, *Now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my Face no more* ; for tho' particular Persons amongst them might see him afterwards, as we find *Trophimus an Ephesian* with him at *Jerusalem*, yet they were to see him no more in the same manner, *preaching the Kingdom of God* amongst them, as they had done before. He takes his leave in a large Speech, beginning at ver. 18. in which, amongst other things, he saith, *Now, upon this our parting, I commend you to God, &c.*

In which Words we may observe, his *Commendation* or *Praise* of the Word of God, and then his *recommending* or *committing* them to that Word, and to God therein.

I. I begin with the *Commendation* which he gives of the Word of God, which he calls the *Word of his Grace*, *able to build them up, and to give them an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified*. We meet with many a noble *Encomium*

on

on the Word ; *Psalm 119.* is almost wholly taken up with the Praise of it. In the Text the *Word* is commended both from the Nature and from the Effects of it.

1. From the Nature of it, it is *the Word of his Grace* ; so ver. 24. it is called *the Gospel of the Grace of God*. The Word and *Gospel* is the glad Tidings of *the Grace and Favour of God in Christ* : it is also the *Vehicle of Grace, the Ministratio*n of the *Spirit*, by which *Grace* is wrought. There were many Institutions of Philosophy, but the Power of the *Spirit of Grace* was not wont to accompany them, as it doth the *Gospel* ; to enlighten, humble, sanctifie and save the Souls of Men : Nay, under the legal Dispensation *Grace* was not given forth in that measure, as it is under the *Gospel*. It is from hence, viz. that the *Gospel* is such a *Word of Grace*, that we need those Apostolical Cautions, *Not to turn the Grace of God into Wantonness* ; *Jude* ver. 4. as they do, who would make *Grace* to harmonize and agree with *Sin*, *2 Pet. 2. 19.* or would make *Grace* to disagree and fall out with the Terms of the *Gospel*; *Eph. 2. 8.*

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And

And again, *Not to receive the Grace of God in vain*, 2 Cor. 6. 1. as they do, who have the Word of Grace, without the Power of the Spirit accompanying it, 1 Thess. 1. 5. or who refuse to be allure^d and won in by the Grace and Love displayed in the Gospel, Mat. 11. 17. The Word is further commended,

2. From the Effects of it. It is a Word of Power; *able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance, &c.* The other Apostle faith of it, it is *able to save the Soul*, Jam. 1. 21. Which is the same Title that is given to Christ himself, *Able to save*, — Heb. 7. 25. Our Lord's Title is communicated to the Word; He saves *Meritoriously* by his Death, *Effectually* by his Spirit, *Instrumentally* by his Word. Two things are affirmed of the Word of Grace, in the Text,

1. It is able to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctify'd. That Heaven is an Inheritance, is plainly seen down in Scripture, 1 Pet. 1. 4. That it is among them that are sanctified, is also plainly deducible from thence. None but the Sanctified, or they that are made Holy, shall be Partakers of it; and it is

is no small part of the Glory of the Inheritance, that it is *among the Sanctify'd*, to be enjoy'd only among holy ones ; *An Inheritance of the Saints in light*, where they not only see God, and behold the Glory of the Redeemer, but have a Holy Society one with another, they sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God*. Now saith the Text, the Word of Grace is *able to give you this Inheritance*. It *gives* you the *Notice* of it, and gives you the *Promise* of it. Heaven and eternal Life is the great *Promise* of the Gospel, to which indeed all the other Promises tend ; only it must be remembered to be a *conditional Promise*, given upon certain Terms and Conditions expressed in the *Word of his Grace*. This both not confound the *Covenant of Grace* with the *Covenant of Works*, for the Conditions of the one and of the other are not the same. The Conditions of the *Covenant of Works* suppose a State of Innocency and Perfection, in which they could be perform'd ; But Repentance, and Faith, which are the Conditions of the *Covenant of Grace*, do own our Guilt, and the fallen State in which we are :

They only respect a Mediator, his Sacrifice and Atonement, which the Covenant of Works faith nothing of ; Nor are they to be performed in our own Strength. The *Conditions* of the Gospel are not therefore contrary to the *Grace* of the Gospel, because they are by no means meritorious of the Promised Inheritance ; Nothing could move him to make such a Promise but his *Grace* ; Nor is there any Reason why the Inheritance should be given to poor penitent Believers, but his free Promise or *Word of Grace* ; especially when these very Conditions are of his own bestowing ; *Faith* is his *Gift*, as well as *Christ* ; And our Lord is exalted, to give *Repentance and Remission of Sins*.

2. He saith, the Word is able to *build you up* ; Which is a Figurative Expression respecting the *Conditions* of the Inheritance promised, and the Preparation which is to be, in order thereunto ; And this also is by means of the *Word*. This Phrase of *Building* is used in several places, 1 Cor. 3. 7. *Ye are God's Building* 1 Pet. 2. 5. *Built up a spiritual House*. By Nature you are as Rubbish, fit only to be cast out ; Or as some wast Place

fit only for a *Habitation of Devils, and Hold of every unclean Spirit*; where dwell Malice, Envy, Pride, the Lusts of Unclean-
ness, &c. Now that you may be *built up*, two things are necessary.

1. The *Foundation* must be laid, and this is by the *Word*, or the *Word* is *able* to do it. Let us compare two Places; The one is *1 Cor. 3. 11.* *Other Foundation can no Man lay, than what is laid, which is Jesus Christ*: The other is *Eph. 2. 20.* *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets—Christ is the only personal Foundation, He is the Rock of Ages, the chief Corner-stone*; But there is a *Doctrinal Foundation*, viz. The *Apostles and Prophets*, that is, the *Writings of the Apostles and Prophets*, the same with the *Word of Grace*, which estab-
litheth **Christ** as the only Foundation on which the Building can stand; The Fundamental Doctrines of which are, That there is no Reconciliation, no Pardon of Sin, but by Jesus Christ, by the Merit and Purchase of his Death: That there must be a new Birth, and great Change in order to an Interest in Christ, and in what he hath purchased: That the

the Beginning and Progress of that Work is by Strength derived from Christ, who is the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*, *Heb. 12. 2.* Thus is Christ the Foundation; and they must needs be foolish Builders, who reject the *Chief Corner-stone*, *Acts 4. 11.* It is dreadful to build upon the *Sand*, but a blessed thing to build or to be built up, on a *Rock*. Which Difference our Lord at large sets forth, *Mat. 7. 24—27.* And if it be said, if Christ be the only Foundation, why do Ministers preach any thing besides Christ and Mercy? Why are there so many Sermons of Terrour, of Humiliation and Sorrow for Sin? and why do they preach up Holiness and good Works? The Answer is easy, We must preach *Humiliation*, *Terrores*, and *Sorrow for Sin*, as necessary to the bringing the Soul to Christ: the casting out the Rubbish is necessary to the laying the Foundation. And then we preach up *Holiness* and *good Works*, as that which is to be built upon the Foundation, when it is rightly laid; which brings us to the Second Thing, *viz.*

2. That

2. That a *Superstructure* must be rear'd upon the Foundation ; and this also is by the *Word* ; Eph. 2. 22. *In whom [i. e. in Christ] ye are builded together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit.* Col. 2. 7. *Built up in him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught :* That as every Building hath an Owner, that rules and guides the House ; so you are not your own, but the Spirit of God must dwell in you, rule over you ; not as an ordinary Building, but as a Temple, a *spiritual House*, dedicated to God, and to his Service. The Building must be glorious, suited to such a Foundation, not with *Wood, Hay, and Stubble*, as Errors, Mistakes, and Miscarriages are called ; but with *Gold, Silver, and precious Stones*, noting those Graces and Duties, that are pure, useful and durable. O ! what a rich House is every holy Soul, built up as with *Gold, Silver, Pearls and Jewels*, fitted and prepared for the Master's Use ! And that is indeed *edifying*, that tends to the maintaining and increasing those Graces and Holy Duties ; and this is what the *Word of Grace is able* to do, and which the Spirit of Grace does do thereby.

by. So much of the **Commendation** of the Word.

II. I proceed to the Apostle's *commending* or committing his Hearers to this Word of Grace, and to God therein. *I commend you, saith he, to God, and to the Word of his Grace.* It is for the sake of this Example that I chose these Words. Having taken another Charge, or undertaken another Work, I am legally to resign up this Parish into the hands of those to whom the Care of providing for it belongs; besides which legal *Resignation*, I am come in this my last Sermon, to resign you up, to *commend* and commit you to God, and the Word of his Grace.

Ministers, when they resign up their People, and their Charge of them, are and should be very desirous to have them in safe hands. When you have any thing that is more than ordinary dear to you, which you must leave, you *commend* it to such an one whom you can trust; and the more Danger you apprehend it may be in, the more careful you are to *commend* or commit it to safe keeping.

ing. This Parish hath been very dear to me ; my first People, my only People ; the Place of my Desires and Vows ; my dearly beloved and longed for ; you had the Strength and Affection of my Youth ; and I am grown grey amongst you, after above one and twenty Years Residence and Labour : And now that I must resign you up, I would fain have you in safe hands. The Apostle, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foresaw what would befall the People to whom he spake when he was gone ; *Acts 20.* *I know this, that after my departing, full grievous Wolves enter in among you, sparing the Flock :* He seems to mean persecutors, or false Teachers, or both. hope that will not be your Case ; but fear, you are not out of danger in other respects ; the Devil will strive to carry on his Designs ; The Drunkards and their Seminaries, which have given all this Trouble, will hope to gain their Advantages by my Removal : I could earnestly desire that you were commended therefore to safe keeping.

Now there is no Safety or safe keeping at a Minister can commend or commit

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his People to, but to God and the Word of his Grace. Accordingly I do here resign you up, and commend you to the Word of Grace, and to God therein.

1. I resign, commend and commit you to the Word of Grace. This I desire to do in the most comprehensive Sense and Manner. I look forward, and acknowledge with Thankfulness, that God has answered my Prayers and Endeavours in providing one to stand in my place and stead *mine Eyes even seeing it.* I commend you therefore to the Word of Grace in the Mouth of my Successor. I deliver you up into his hands, as the Minister of the Lord for your Good. I discharge you the Duty and Obedience which you owe to me as your Teacher and Guide: And I hereby commend and commit you to his Teaching and Oversight. And then I look backward, and I do commend and commit you to the Word of Grace, as has been delivered to you in and by my Ministry for so long a Space of Time together. I am conscious to my self manifold Miscarriages among you in my Ministry; I have grievously fallen short, even in those things in which

some have thought me over-doing. But upon Examination, I have, thro' Grace, the Testimony of my Conscience, that I have faithfully delivered to you the Word of God from this place; that I have not thro' Fear or Favour kept back what I thought profitable for you. I trust, I am free from the Blood of all Men, of the Drunkards, unclean Persons, Sabbath-breakers, profane Swearers, Neglecters of their Families, unjust Dealers, such as live in Hypocrisy, &c. All which I have carefully warn'd: I have spoken plainly to you, too plainly for many, who could not patiently bear my Words. I have had many Defects, the Lord pardon them. I stand not upon mine own Vindication; but as I lift up my Hand to the most High God at my Ordination, that I would teach nothing (as required of Necessity to eternal Salvation) but that which I should be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture: So now to that Word I trust and commit you; to the Promises of the Word, and to the Conduct of the Word, I resign and commend you.

I commit and *commend* you to the *Promises* of the Word, according to the Terms thereof, and the Method which the Lord useth to fulfil them. I have laid before you the *Promises* of eternal Life, by way of *Treaty* with you; provided you yield to the *Conditions* thereof: and as they stand *confirm'd*, and shall be made good to all that embrace them, and perform their part of the *Covenant*. So I commend you to the Lord's *Covenant*; I commit you and yours to the Lord God of *Israel*, under whose Wings you are come to trust. If you are the *Mourners*, you shall be *comforted*; if you *hunger* and *thirst* after *Righteousness*, you shall be *filled*; if you *come* to Him, *weary* and *heavy-laden*, He will give you *Rest*; if you *forsake* your *Ways* and *Thoughts*, and *turn* to the Lord, He will have *Mercy* upon you, and abundantly *pardon* you.

Then again, I *commend* and commit you to the *Conduct* of the Word. We are *ministerial Guides*, but the *Word of God* is your *real Guide*; to the *Direction* and *Guidance* thereof I commit you. I cannot repeat now all the *Directions* which in above two thousand Sermons I have

have deliver'd to you ; but I will name some of them, as my last Advice, and the Doctrines that I commend to you, and that I commit and commend you to, under these two Heads.

First, I commit and commend you to the *Conduct* of that Word of Grace, which is to lead Sinners at first to Christ ; in such Particulars as these that follow, *viz.* that

You must lie under a deep Sense of the Evil of Sin, its Nature, Vileness and mischievous Effects. Look on it as contrary to the Nature of God, an Opposition to his Holiness, a daring his Justice, a fighting against his Sovereignty, a denying his Omnipotency, a slighting his Power, yea his Goodness and his Patience. Look on it as having turn'd the Angels out of Heaven, and Adam out of Paradise ; as that which hath drown'd a whole World, and turn'd Cities into Ashes by Fire and Brimstone from Heaven ; that it is Sin which has ruin'd Nations and Kingdoms ; and as to particular Persons, hath brought down Judgments temporal, spiritual and eternal ; for which Hell is prepared, and Multitudes of Sinners brought thither already.

You

You must be perswaded of the Nature and Necessity of the great Change by Conversion. The State by Nature being so bad, you must well consider what is to be done for your Recovery ; you *must be born again* ; it is very hopeful to find Persons under some Convictions and Awakenings ; to have good Affections and kindly Inclinations ; to abstain from gross Sin, and to give Attendance upon Ordinances. But you must know, that it is not enough to be civil, but that you must be spiritual ; that you must not rest in any thing short of a thorow Change ; there must be a *new Creature*, a new spiritual *Sensation*, that you may see the Vileness of Sin, the Excellency of Christ, the Beauty of Holiness ; that you may taste and see how good and gracious the Lord is : there must be new *Powers*, a spiritual Appetite, hungring and thirsting after Christ ; breathing and crying, the Spirit enabling to *cry, Abba Father*, and assisting with *Groans that cannot be uttered* : there must be new *Attainments*, gracious Discourse, spiritual Growth, heavenly Work ; so as to work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling.

You

You must further, break off from the false Hopes and Presumptions, that Sinners are apt to fool themselves with. You must not depend on Church-Privileges, that you are of the Church, and admitted to full Communion therein; you must not trust to some outward Performances, or that you have gain'd thereby the good Opinion of others; you may perish with all these, and perish so much the more dreadfully; *Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father. Many will say to our Lord, in that day, We have eaten and drank in thy Presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets; To whom he will answer, I know you not, &c.* But if you say, that you hope and trust in Christ; is not that he whom you refuse and neglect, whose Spirit you vex and resist? If your Hope and Trust make you go on more securely in your Sins, and serve only to quiet your Consciences in pursuing your Lusts; then is your Hope wrong, and will be *like a Spider's Web:* This is not to trust in Christ, but to affront him. *Is Christ the Minister of Sin? Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid.*

You

You must, next, *Have a care of delaying your Repentance, of stifling Convictions, and of putting off the great Work till another time.* How little do you consider either what *Sin* or what *Repentance* is, when you delay and put off your turning from *Sin to God*? Observe how it sounds, it is as if you should say, " We would " have a little time longer to affront " our Maker, and wound our Consciences in: We would plunge our selves " deeper in the Mire; and lye a little " longer in a Leprosy and Stench: We " would do that a little more, which " we intend to be ashamed of, and to " loath our selves for, and which we " must be cut to the Heart in the Re- " membrance of, when we have done. Now is this Reason, or Madness? What a despising is this of the sparing Mercy of God? What a number of Instances are there of those who have been cut off in their Sins, who once thought they would repent before they dy'd? How unlikely is it, that you should be more willing hereafter than now, when *Sin* is known to be so hardning a thing, and *Custom in Sin* gives the Devil the faster hold of you?

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How know you, that you shall enjoy the Helps hereafter, that now are offer'd to you? Perhaps you may not always enjoy the *Means of Grace*; or he may shut up your day in Darkness, by withdrawing the *Spirit of Grace*. His *Spirit* may no more strive with you: But when you have vexed his *Holy Spirit*, he may *turn to be your Enemy, and fight against you*.

Moreover, you must be perswaded of the Readiness of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, to receive them that come to him, or that turn to God by him. None came to him in the time of his Abode here on Earth, but he graciously received them; tho he seem'd to neglect the *Woman of Canaan* at first, yet afterwards (like *Joseph*) he could not refrain himself: Yea, tho they had been very bad before, as *Publicans and Harlots*, yet upon their return, they were receiv'd. Though you cannot come to him, with the Feet of your Body, as they did; yet Faith and Repentance are thus expressed, as a *coming to him*, as a forsaking Sin, Satan and the World, and turning to him, as the Prodigal to his Father, as the Patient to the Physician,

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as a poor condemned Malefactor to an han
Advocate. And tho now he is in Hea
ven he hath chang'd his Condition, yet
hath he not chang'd his Disposition. He
was at great cost to make a way of Acces
that you might come to the Father by
him; and now he earnestly gives you
his Calls and Invitations of Grace: He
does not conceal his Willingness, he re
quires you to come to him; and com
plains of Sinners, that they *will not come*
to him, that they might have Life. Your
Impotency is from your Obsturacy; for
he is ready to encourage you, and ready
to assist you, in your coming to him
and returning to the Father by him.

Lastly, you must beg the *Assistance*
of the holy Spirit of God, to enable you in
this great Work of returning to God by Faith
and Repentance. Be sensible of your own
Weakness and Insufficiency; but know
withall that there is provision made of
Grace and Strength in the Gospel; and
that you have Encouragements to feel
the Holy Spirit of God, not only from
the general notice of his *compassionate Na*
ture towards poor Creatures in Misery
but from the *gracious Design* that he had

to an hand ; and the cost that he hath been
Heat to bring about that great design of the
, yet Salvation of fallen Creatures, with Ho-
. He our to his Justice, by a Mediator ; and
cess, from the more plentiful *Effusions* of the
er by spirit in Gospel-times. It is said, *John 7.*
s you 9. That the *Spirit was not given*, viz.
e : He in that Measure as afterwards, because
he re Jesus was not yet glorify'd. But now the
l com Lord is glorify'd ; and is gone up on High,
: come that he might give Gifts to Men ; and
You the Gospel is the *Ministration of the Spirit* ;
y ; for and he has commanded you, to ask that
ready you may receive, and promis'd to give the
o him, Holy Spirit to them that ask him : Yea he
n. still beforehand with you, and hath al-
ffist and ready given you of the common Work-
e you in gs of the Spirit ; and hath made his Or-
by Faith nances the means of Grace, and of re-
ur own living the Spirit : And they will obtain
t know their end, if they are not refus'd or a-
made o us'd by you. This is the *Word of his*
el ; and *Grace that I commend and commit you to,*
to feel order to the leading you to Christ.

Secondly, I further commend and re-
gn you over to the *Conduct* of that *Word*
Misery *Grace*, that, after you are brought to
he hat Christ, is to lead you throughout the whole

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Course of your Lives ; in such Instances as these, viz. That,

You must *expect to meet with Temptations all along your way ; understand what they are, and arm your selves against them.* The Devil will assault you, you will be tempted to Pride and Conceitednes ; He will endeavour to puff you up with Conceits of your Gifts and Graces : He will strive to draw you to Security and Negligence in Duty ; to make you lay down your Watch, and to restrain Prayer before God. You'll meet with Temptations to turn your Zeal into little Disputes and Controversies, and to grow cool or lukewarm in the weightier Matters. Besides all the Mischief you are in danger of by *wicked Men*, the Devil's Instruments ; from the Examples and Flatgeries of some, and the Scorns and Reproaches of others. If they cannot persecute you with their Hands, they will with their Tongues ; and you have need of Wisdom, and Courage, of Watchfulness and Strength, against so many and so great Temptations.

You must, further, *maintain the Honour of God in his Ordinances.* Have

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care you neglect not *secret Prayer*; enter into your *Closets*, into Places where you may be least in danger of Ostentation or Interruption: Much of the Sincerity of your Hearts may be known by your secret Retirements; there may be Expressions and Affections that are not suited to Prayer with others. Yet you must not, under pretence of Prayer by your selves, neglect *Family-Prayer*; without which you can never engage, as *Joshua* did, for your *Houses*, that they *will serve the Lord*. Christian Families are called *Churches* on this account, because of the Duties of God's Worship that are to be perform'd therein; and every thing there is to be *sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer*. But tho the Lord doth not despise the Dwellings and Families of his People, yet he *loves the Gates of Zion, better than all the Dwellings of Jacob*: Publick Worship redounds chiefly to the Honour of God in the World; and therefore it is, that the People of God have so bewail'd the Loss, when they have been depriv'd of the House of God, at any time; and have so priz'd the publick Ordinances, when they have enjoy'd them.

them. See that you esteem one Day in his Courts better than a thousand ; and be ready to say from Experience, How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts !

You must, in the next place, be careful in all relative Duties ; and mind the particular Duties of those Places and Stations in which it pleaseth God to set you. *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers: Give Honour to whom Honour is due, Tribute to whom Tribute, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear.* You must needs be subject not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake. So also in the Church, you must obey them that have the Rule over you, for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an account. The Priests Lips preserve Knowledge, and in difficult Cases you must enquire the Law at their Mouths ; and the Message they are authorized to bring you from God, you must receive not as the Word of Men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of God. So as to Family-Relations, How knowest thou, O Man, but that thou mayst save thy Wife ; and how knowest thou, O Wife, but that thou mayst save thy Husband ? Seeing we read,

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there are some that will not be won in by the Word, who yet *are won by the Conversation of their Wives.* Children, honour your Parents: hearken to their Instructions; submit to their Reproofs; fear to offend them, and endeavour to be a *Comfort to them in their elder Years.* And you Parents, from the first devote your Children to God; instruct them in the things relating to their everlasting Salvation; reprove them for, and restrain them from sinning against God; give them a holy Example, and daily offer up humble and hearty Prayer, as Job did for his Children, *according to the Number of them all.* You Servants, obey your Masters lawful Commands; neglect not their Business; do not defraud them, nor by any Crossness or Murmuring provoke them. And let not Masters rule over their Servants as over Beasts or Slaves: Mind first the Good of your Servants Souls, and give them *what is just and equal*, in Instruction, Provision, Work and Wages.

Moreover, you must *grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* You must make con-
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stant Use of *Christ*, in your dayly Walk ; as an *Advocate* that may procure you continued Pardon and Peace ; and as a *Counseller*, to help and assist you by his *Holy Spirit*. Make *Progress* in and through *Him* in the ways of *God*. Hereby is the *Father glorified*, that you bring forth much *Fruit*. As Men desire much Learning, much Riches, &c. so must Christians desire much Holiness ; especially they that have more Time and more Helps than others, should endeavour after more Grace, and to make better Improvements than they.

Again, you must be seriously engag'd every day in an actual Preparation for Death and Judgment. Let Grace be in continual Exercise ; your Loyns girt, and your Lamps burning, and you your selves as Servants that wait for their Lord. Set your Houses, and chiefly your Hearts in order, often call your selves to a strict Account and Examination, before you are called before the great Tribunal. *Dying daily*, in the Meditation of Death and Preparation for it, will be the way to triumph over Death when it comes : If *Christ* be your *Life* now, *Death* will be your *Gain* at last.

Finally,

Finally, you must *mind the Souls of others, as well as your own*: First indeed your own, and then the Souls of others; especially the Souls of them that are under your care; of your Children and Servants, concerning whom you must give a particular Account: But not only theirs, but you must endeavour, what in you lies, to promote the Salvation of all, with whom you do converse. Instruct the ignorant, *warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded; exhort one another dayly, while it is called to day; and provoke one another to Love and to good Works.* If by any former unworthy Carriage, you have contributed to the hurt of the Souls of any, you have stronger Engagements lying upon you; as a sort of spiritual Restitution, to be doing them what good you can: To be sure many are endeavouring the Destruction of Souls, do you therefore earnestly desire and endeavour after their Salvation. They that know the worth of Souls, and what a precious Price the Redeeming them cost, will be earnestly desirous to promote the great Design, which our Lord himself came about, *viz. the Saving*

the Souls of Men. It is but Gratitude and as a return of Thankfulness for what hath been done for you, to do what you can for the Good and Benefit of others. This will be an Evidence of your own Sincerity, and will contribute to your Growth in Grace, and tend to your Peace and Comfort at Death, and to your Crown at the day of our Lord's Appearing; when *they that turn many to Righteousness* shall be made to *shine like Stars for ever and ever*. This is the *Word of his Grace*, to the Conduct of which I commend and commit you.

2. But I cannot aright commit and commend you to the *Word of Grace*, unless I also commend, commit, and resign you up to the *God of Grace* therein. So the Apostle doth here; *I commend you* faith he, *to God and the Word, &c.* So did the Apostles elsewhere, *Acts 14. 23.* *They commended them to the Lord on whom they believed.* I resign you up to his Protection, Care and Cure. *The great, the good Shepherd of the Sheep* take Care of these Sheep. This is to be done by Faith and Prayer in these Particulars following, viz.

That the Lord would bless my Labours amongst you for your present, future, & your

A Farewell-Sermon.

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our everlasting Good. I have planted, &c. Now the *Lord give the Increase.* The Lord grant, that no Soul may perish thro' any negligenee of mine in this place; I desire you may have Grace to make up by your future Diligence, whatever hath been wanting in your or my care; that not only what Good hath been already done, may spread and go forward; but that the Seed sown, and not yet appearing, may come up when I am gone; particularly among young ones: and herein that Saying may be true, *one sows, and another reapeth:* yea that the Lord by his Grace, may make these last Words more useful, than many former Sermons have been. *Sampson* was more at his *Death* than in his *Life.* May more be done now for the Destruction of Satan's Kingdom, than in many Sermons heretofore. I am afraid there are many yet in their Sins, and under the Power of their Lusts; *Lord, strengthen me this once;* that this last Attempt may not be in vain.

That I may hear of the flourishing of Religion in this Parish, and in these Parts of the Country, when I am at a distance

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from you ; of a strict Observation of the Lord's Day ; of serious Watchfulness and constant Duties in your Families of a greater Concern for the Reformation of *Manners*, and the carrying on the good Ends of the *Society*, in this Neighbourhood, in reference thereunto.

That God would give you a Ministry after his own Heart: That you may duly attend on, esteem and reverence him, that is to be set over you in the Lord ; and that God may graciously and mightily assist him, and prosper the Work of his Ministry in this place.

That you may in your Places help forward your Minister's Work; not only, by being Priests as it were in your own Families but by combining together for Prayer, and mutual Instruction, and Christian Conference. Not that I would have you usurp the Ministerial Office (which was the *Gainsaying of Corah*) nor will there be any danger of it in such Religious Societies, if they be managed with Humanity, without Disputes about unnecessary Controversies, or despising others under pretence of one having greater Gifts than another : especially also if such Conference

A Farewell-Sermon. 37

rences be manag'd in a due Subordination to your Minister ; still engaging one another to a constant Attendance upon him, and in difficult Cases consulting with him ; and, if it may be, desiring his Presence and Assistance, at proper Seasons, with you.

That you may be delivered from Wolves that would destroy the Sheep ; from erroneous, wicked, and ungodly Persons : That after my Departure you may not be seduc'd by Quakers, Papists, or other dangerous and designing Men ; nor drawn aside by the Prophane to neglect the Worship of God, and the solemn Assemblies.

That, Lastly, we may comfortably meet at last in and amongst the general Assembly and Church of the First-born ; that tho' we part here, we may meet in Heaven, and never part more. This is a changing World, but that above is unchangeable.

Thus I have commended and committed you to God ; but before I conclude, I desire to add these two things.

1. That in vain, as to you, is my committing and commanding you to God, if you do not commit, yield and resign up your selves to him. For this

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we have the Example of holy *David*, *Psal. 31. 5.* *Into thy hands I commit my Spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth.* In times of Danger Men settle their Affairs, and dispose of what they most value into safe hands ; now your Souls or Spirits are the most precious thing you have to dispose of ; and a Redeemer's Hands are the only safe place in which they can be deposited : in him there is Willingness to receive the Trust, and Ability to *keep what you commit to him unto that day* ; he is faithful that has promised ; only there must be Reconciliation. It is irksom to *commend* your most precious Concerns to an Enemy ; there must be a *Covenant-Relation*, a gracious Transaction between God and your Souls ; wherein you, being sensible of your Misery and Inability to help your selves, do entirely give up your selves to him by Faith and Prayer. Indeed where else will you leave your Souls ? or what else will you do, when God shall *require your Souls* however ? But if you can *commend* or commit your Souls to him, as into the Hands of a faithful Creator and Redeemer, you may then commit any thing else, and trust

trust him with your Bodies, Estates, Relations : You may *commit your way unto the Lord, and trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass.*

2. That when I am thus committing, commanding and resigning *you* up to God, you must also commit me and mine to God, in solemn Prayer and Supplication for us. *Brethren, pray for us, we trust we have a good Conscience.* These were the Words of the great Apostle, *Heb. 13. 18.* who frequently and earnestly desired the Prayers of the People to whom he preached and wrote. This is but equal : I here *commend you to the Lord, and the Word of his Grace,* in this my last Farewell ; now, my beloved Friends in Christ, do you resign me up. I know it is a hard thing for some of you to give me up ; I seem as if I were torn from divers of you ; but not only must you yield and *resign* me freely, but you must *reign, commit and give up* me and mine *to God.* It is the last and only thing you can now do for me, to command me and mine to God in earnest Prayer. I ask it in return for all the Kindness I have shew'd you for so great a part of my Life, in which I have labour'd

labour'd amongst you. If I have obliged any of you, if I have been an Instrument of Good to any of your Souls, I desire only a Remembrance in your Prayers when I am gone. We do not part in Anger, or from any Pique or Quarrel, but upon Consideration, taking Advice, and seeking God by Prayer. Many are apprehensive of great Difficulties I shall meet with, in the place to which I go: Certain it is, I go about a Work in great measure new to me, and much unknown. Pray for me, commit and commend me to the Lord. Thus with joint Supplications let our Souls meet at the Throne of Grace (when our Bodies are separated) offering up our Prayers to the same God and Father, thro' the same great Mediator, for the Assistance of the same Holy Spirit, in whatsoever place, or to whatsoever Work it pleaseth our Master to call us.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.

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